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NSC BRIEFING

8 March 1955

CHINESE OFFSHORE ISLANDS

- I. Lull in offshore islands has continued since Nanchishan evacuation (25 Feb). ChiComs appear in no hurry to start moves against Matsus and Quemoy.
  - A. ChiNats in process moving full strength div (11,000 troops, 84th Div) from Formosa to Matsus, but ChiComs have made no move to interfere. Have not even reconnoitered islands by air.
  - B. No major naval or air forces moved to areas opposite islands recently. ChiNat air reconnaissance does not indicate speedy reconstruction of airfields in vicinity.
- II. There are signs ChiComs making steady preparations for future attacks.
  - A. ChiNat garrison on Matsus saw ChiCom convoy of 33 ships, including about 10 landing craft, moving north from waters just north of Matsus on 6 Mar. MAAG thinks this convoy may have brought troops from Chekiang Province. Estimated 125,000 ChiCom troops already in Fukien.

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- B. ChiNat sources report increasing naval activity (still small-scale) near Quemoy and Matsus. Torpedo boats and conventional landing craft reported these areas for first time recently.
  - C. Construction work, presumably related to artillery positions, continues on Peiling Peninsula north of Matsus.
- III. Peiping Radio on 4-5 March took note of main points made by SecState Dulles in Taipei previous day.
- A. Commentary observed that US plans "to attack China's mainland" in event of military build-up and that US "seeks to expand its aggression to Quemoy and Matsu Islands."
  - B. Commentary concluded that US "must change its aggressive policy, otherwise it cannot escape responsibility for the consequences." This warning is routine, does not change existing national estimates on Communist intentions.

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